

Rural Dryland Development in Lebanon through Innovative Market Approaches

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Overview – Economy & Trade

- Typically open economy, no restrictions on foreign exchange, capital movement or foreign investment.
- A predominantly importing country with substantial deficits, but counteracted by foreign income earnings and service earnings such as tourism, banking and insurance.
- Economic Structure, GDP composition
 - Agriculture 12%
 - Industry & Trade : 27%
 - Services: 61%
- EU is Lebanon's principal trading partner (43% of Lebanese imports and 11% of its exports).



Overview – Int. Agreements

- Party to: biodiversity, climate change, desertification, Ozone layer protection etc..
- EU-Lebanon Association Agreement signed in 2002 and entered force in 2006.
- WTO accepted Lebanon as an observer in 1999, the government is working on accession.
- Acceded in 1997 to the Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement (GAFTA)
- EFTA-Lebanon Free Trade Agreement concluded in 2004.



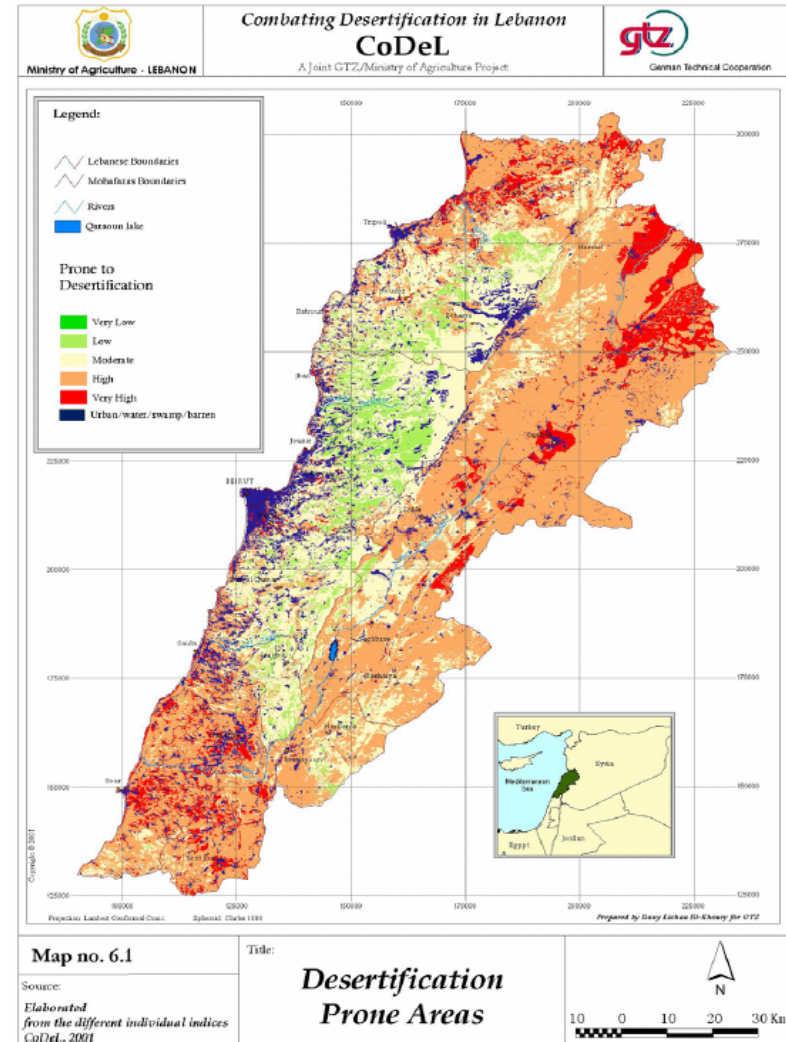
UNCCD Implementation

- UNCCD signed in Sep. 1995, ratified in Dec. 2005.
- National Action Program (NAP) developed in 2003 by the MoA and the support of UNDP and GTZ.
- NAP transformed into Local Action Plans (LAPs) in 2006 by MoA with support from UNDP/DDC/GTZ/GM
- Several water management-related pilot projects are being executed.

Areas Prone to Desertification

○ Information Layers

- Climate Index
- Soil Index
- Vegetation Index
- Land use intensity
- Demographic pressure





Resource Mobilization Strategy GM Support

- Aim: To mobilize resources for sustainable land management, which includes combating desertification.
- It is a coordinated arrangement and intervention of different financial resources, instruments and mechanisms to secure sustainable, timely and predictable investments for UNCCD/NAP implementation.
- It identifies actions for improving the enabling environment for its implementation.
- It provides guidance and entry points for tapping into different resources:
 - internal sources: public budget
 - external sources: bilateral and multilateral donors (donor matrix)
 - Innovative sources



Rural Dryland Development Through Innovative Market Approaches

Three main Objectives or Pillars:

- Promotion of innovative trade initiatives aiming at increasing market opportunities for dryland products.
- Exploration and promotion of fair trade as an alternative livelihood option for rural dryland producers.
- Linkage of on-going eco-tourism initiatives to drylands and their agricultural products.



DDC North-South Cooperation Program

- Promotion of sustainable livelihoods in the drylands of the Middle East and North Africa.
- Initiated between Lebanon and Finland, next with Tunisia and Morocco.

Counterparts in Finland:

- Rural Women's Advisory Association RWAO.
- Wild North Eco-tourism Organization.



Dryland People Brand

Product development program

- Setup of a multi-stakeholder working group on enhancing the market accessibility of dryland products to EU markets.
- 22 dryland agricultural products identified and sent to RWAO.
- RWAO established contacts to health food shops, ethnic shops, delicatessen shops and department stores in Finland for the purpose of familiarization with the products.
- Organoleptic evaluation (Jan. 2007) identified 12 products.

Drylands Products

- Oregano (*Origanum syriacum*)
- Zaatar Mix
- Sumaq
- Dry Almonds
- Carob molasses
- Carob/Tahine spread
- Burghol
- Herbal tea
- Sweets from sesame seeds
- Raisins
- Rose Water





Product development program

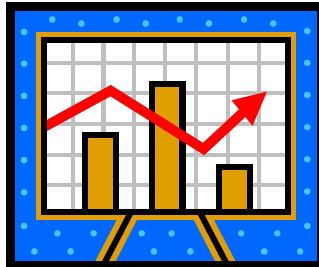
- Microbiological analysis are underway using many parameters determined by the Finnish Customs Department.
- Market studies to find suitable trading niche for dryland products, find value-added & development needs.
- Product selection workshop in Finland (Feb. 2007), 3-5 pilot products will be identified for further development
- In Lebanon, identification of cooperatives and rural women groups for selected products.
- Capacity building and training of selected producers on matters related to product improvement (quality, packaging etc...) and EU quality standards.



Why Fair Trade ?

- An innovative marketing and livelihoods enhancement option for rural dryland producers and agricultural SMEs.
- International Fair Trade Certification, potentially a privileged entry point for drylands produce at domestic, regional and international levels
- Lebanon a starting point because it cannot compete with large-scale producers from neighboring countries

Impact of Fair Trade



Economic

Access to new markets
Value added
Increased wages to producers



Environmental

Many fair trade initiatives contribute to environmental aims:
- respect of eco-system, conservation of natural resources
Some environmental projects are funded through fair trade income

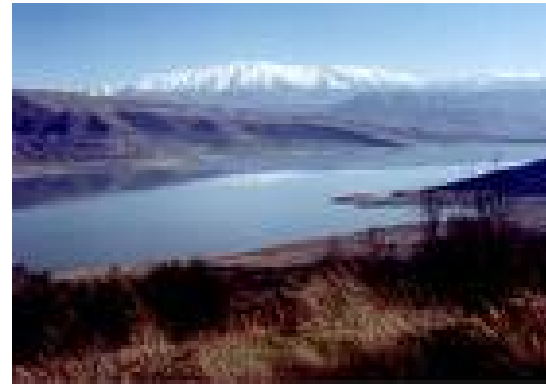
Social

System targets small farmers, no middle men
Improving livelihoods of rural farmers
Better working conditions
Better access to health services, education



Dryland Eco-tourism promoted

- Lebanon has comparative advantage over the region.
- Several eco-tourism initiatives (USAID) are in place and could be linked to dryland producers and communities.
- Capacity building on eco-tourism. Training of selected Lebanese partners by the Wild North Finland.





Thank You



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